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**Amendment**

**In the Claims:**

Please amend claims 1, 14 and 17, as follows:

1. (currently amended) A fire retardant intumescent coating composition selected from the group consisting of powder coating compositions and solvented coating compositions, aqueous coating compositions and ~~powder coating compositions~~, said composition comprising:

- (a) 30 to 60% by weight of a phosphorous containing material which decomposes to produce phosphoric acid when the coating is exposed to fire;
- (b) 10 to 30% by weight of a thermosetting binder;
- (c) 2.5 to 10% by weight of a curing agent for the thermosetting binder; and
- d) 5 to 40% by weight of a thermoplastic binder,

wherein each of the thermosetting and thermoplastic binders comprise groups that react with the said phosphoric acid, thereby imparting charring and blowing functions to the intumescent coating composition, ~~and,~~  
~~further wherein, when the said coating composition is the said solvented coating composition, the said thermoplastic binder comprises an oxygenated heterocyclic thermoplastic resin.~~

2. (original) A fire retardant intumescent coating composition according to claim 1 wherein the binder system accounts for 30% or more by weight of the composition.

3. (previously presented) A fire retardant intumescent coating composition according to claim 1 wherein the phosphorous containing material is a sodium, potassium or ammonium polyphosphate.

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4. (previously presented) A fire retardant intumescent coating composition according to claim 1 wherein the thermosetting binder is a hydroxylated thermosetting resin.
5. (previously presented) A fire retardant intumescent coating composition according to any one of claims 1 to 4 wherein the thermosetting resin is an epoxy resin.
6. (previously presented) A fire retardant intumescent coating composition according to claim 1 wherein the curing agent for the thermosetting binder is a phenolic curing agent.
7. (canceled).
8. (previously presented) A fire retardant intumescent composition according to claim 1 wherein the thermoplastic is an aldehyde or ketone resin.
9. (previously presented) A fire retardant intumescent coating composition according to claim 1 containing 0.1 to 10% by weight of a melt viscosity modifier.
10. (original) A fire retardant intumescent coating composition according to claim 9 wherein the melt viscosity modifier is hydrogenated castor oil.
11. (previously presented) A fire retardant intumescent coating composition according to claim 1 containing 1 to 10% by weight of a colouring agent.
12. (original) A fire retardant intumescent coating composition according to claim 11 wherein the colouring agent is titanium dioxide.

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13. (previously presented) A fire retardant intumescent coating composition according to claim 1 containing one or more additives selected from the group consisting of a china clay, melamine phosphate, vitrifiers, metal salts and melamine.

14. (currently amended) A fire retardant intumescent powder coating composition as claimed in claim 1,

further wherein, the said composition is made by a process comprising premixing the said components (a)-(d), extruding the premix, and grinding the thus formed extrudate to form a powder.

15-16. (canceled).

17. (currently amended) A composition according to claim 14 wherein the thermoplastic resin is an oxygenated heterocyclic thermoplastic resin.

18. (previously presented) A composition according to claim 17 wherein the thermoplastic resin is an aldehyde or ketone resin.

19. (canceled).